

James Shepherd Freeman

Do not think for one instant that a life of crime is glamorous and exciting. It is not. It is a life of degradation, dishonesty, misery, violence, and loss of liberty. It has been more than 30 years since the Mr Asia drug syndicate came apart, when the handleless, toothless body of Martin Johnstone was found dumped in a quarry in England. The members of the syndicate were responsible for a string of dead bodies all over the world and the importation of hundreds of kilograms of heroin and marijuana into Australia, New Zealand and Britain - and they made tens of millions of dollars doing it. In this never before heard story from the only surviving member of the syndicate, James Shepherd tells of Mr Asia's rise and fall in gritty, horrifying detail. This is not the flashy, glamourised account put forward in Underbelly, but raw, unadulterated truth. James Shepherd was named by the 1983 Stewart Royal Commission as second in charge of the Mr Asia Drug Syndicate, and was given a 25 year sentence for his role. The long years spent in jail contemplating the murder and misery caused by the syndicate convinced him that the full story needed to be told - as a warning to others, if nothing else. The result is something unique - as fascinating as it is horrifying. It's the real insiders account of the multi-million dollar, kill-or-be-killed world of our most notorious international drug syndicate.

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